

December 2007

# S.E.A.L.I.F.T

THE U.S. NAVY'S MILITARY SEALIFT COMMAND

## Vietnam MSC returns to



INSIDE — SEALOGEUR commander visits East Africa



# Cooperative strategy for 21st century sea power

When I go out to speak in public, whether it's to the Navy League, an ROTC unit or a chapter of the National Defense Transportation Association, I usually quote Alfred Thayer Mahan, the noted naval officer and historian, who reminded us that the United States of America is a maritime nation.

I go beyond that to point out that we're a maritime nation in a global economy. We import and export goods worth more than \$1.1 trillion every year, and that's growing. More than 38,000 ocean shipping containers enter U.S. ports every day. That's almost 1,600 every hour, 24 hours a day. And the average grows by about eight percent every year.

We can't survive as a nation without ocean trade routes and international trade.

So, if the security, prosperity and vital interests of the United States are increasingly coupled with those of other nations, then it's in our interest to work toward a peaceful global system of interdependent networks of trade, finance, information, law, people and governance.

## Updated maritime strategy

On Oct. 16, Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Gary Roughead, along with the commandants of the Marine Corps and the Coast Guard, unveiled a new, cooperative strategy for 21st century sea power.

"This strategy represents a new vision for the 21st century," said Adm. Roughead. "It codifies longstanding challenges and reflects a commitment by the maritime services to work cooperatively with friends, partners and allies to realize a shared vision of mutual security, stability and prosperity."

Yes, we prosper because of this global system of exchange among nations. At the same time, however, we realize that the system is vulnerable to disruptions that can produce cascading and harmful effects far from their sources. Widespread war, regional conflict, terrorism, lawlessness and natural disasters all have the potential to threaten both U.S. national security and world prosperity.

Seventy percent of the world is covered by water. Eighty percent of the world lives on or near the coastline. Ninety percent of our commerce sails across the waterways. And MSC ships are on those waterways, on every ocean, every day.

## Maritime strategy concept

The CNO's maritime strategy reaffirms the use of sea power to influence actions and activities at sea and ashore around the world. The expeditionary character and versatility of maritime forces provide the United States with the advantage of enlarging or contracting its military footprint in

areas where access is denied or limited. The vast maneuver space offered by the sea allows maritime forces to be adjusted as needed to meet mission requirements.

## Regional combat power

Regionally concentrated, credible combat power in the Western Pacific and the Persian Gulf/Indian Ocean will protect vital U.S. interests, reassure friends and allies and keep potential adversaries at bay. This kind of combat power can be selectively and rapidly repositioned to meet changing needs. Our Naval Fleet Auxiliary Force ships will keep the Navy fleets ready to go, wherever they are deployed, and our prepositioning ships in these areas stand by to deliver combat power to our warfighters.

At the same time, expanded cooperative relationships with other nations in the region will promote the security and stability of the maritime domain for the benefit of everyone. While forces can be surged, trust and cooperation cannot. Mutual understanding and respect must be built over time into a consideration of the strategic interests of all parties.

## Sea power

Sea power will deter war between major powers. While war with another great power may seem unlikely, the ruinous effects of such a war make it crucial that it be actively deterred. We will therefore pursue deterrence that includes a credible and scalable ability to retaliate against aggressors conventionally and unconventionally.

Sea power also must be able to win wars. Our maritime forces are an indispensable element of the joint or combined force that gives commanders freedom of maneuver at sea. Reinforced by a robust sealift capability, sea control and power projection enable extended campaigns ashore. Here, MSC's prepositioning and sealift ships will play a major role in bringing combat

firepower to the warfighters, wherever, whenever.

## Humanitarian operations, counterterrorism and special warfare

The new maritime strategy also addresses the vital importance of humanitarian operations. Distributed forces that are organized by mission and made up of integrated Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard capabilities will have missions ranging from humanitarian operations to an increased emphasis on counterterrorism and irregular warfare. In particular, this strategy recognizes the rising importance and need for increased peacetime activities in Africa and the Western Hemisphere.

USNS Comfort's deployment to the Caribbean and Latin America this summer is an excellent example of this new emphasis. The main point here is to prevent or contain local disruptions before they have an impact globally. The preference is to deter disruptions altogether by establishing good relations with partners in the various regions.

## Homeland defense

It has often been said that the best defense is a good offense. Maritime forces will defend the homeland by identifying and neutralizing threats as far from our shores as possible. When directed, maritime forces will also promptly support civil authorities in the event of an attack or natural disaster on our own shores, such as our response to Hurricane Katrina on the Gulf Coast.

## Expanded core capabilities

Although the sea services conduct many missions, six capabilities comprise the core of U.S. maritime power and reflect an increase in emphasis on those activities that prevent war and build partnerships:

- Forward presence
- Deterrence
- Sea control
- Power projection

- Maritime security
- Humanitarian assistance and disaster response

## Moving forward in the 21st century

Five of those capabilities are fairly traditional, and MSC has a daily and vital role in supporting each of them. The sixth is newly emphasized, and MSC will figure uniquely and prominently in that capability.

Our recent humanitarian assistance missions with USNS Comfort and USNS Mercy are prime examples.

We'll see more about all six core areas as the Navy moves forward with this new strategy. And, as we do, rest assured that MSC will play a continuing role through our core commitment to provide the right Naval Fleet Auxiliary Force, special mission, prepositioning and sealift forces at the right cost, at the right time and in the right place. It's that commitment and

MSC's people that will help us build our part of the cooperative strategy for 21st century sea power.

Keep the faith!

Robert D. Reilly Jr.  
Rear Admiral, U.S. Navy  
Commander, Military Sealift Command

*Sealift* is an authorized publication for members and employees of the Navy's Military Sealift Command. Contents of this publication are not necessarily the official views of or endorsed by the U.S. government, the Department of Defense or the Department of the Navy. *Sealift* is published monthly by the Military Sealift Command Office of Public Affairs as authorized under NAVPUBINST 5600.42A. Submission of articles and letters should be addressed to Editor, *Sealift*, Military Sealift Command, 914 Charles Morris Court, S.E., Washington Navy Yard, D.C. 20398-5540; phone (202) 685-5055 or DSN 325-5055; fax (202) 685-5067; or via e-mail to sealift.editor@navy.mil. All photographic submissions must be sent via e-mail, express mail or parcel service.

**COMSC** Rear Adm. Robert D. Reilly Jr., USN  
**Director, Public Affairs** Timothy Boulay  
**Editor** Rosemary Heiss  
**Writers** Edward Baxter, Singapore  
Bill Cook, Norfolk, Va.  
Susan Melow, Norfolk, Va.  
Laura Seal, Washington  
Gillian Bringham, Naples  
Sarah Burford, San Diego  
Dale Allen, Washington  
**Art Director** Susan Thomas, Washington  
**Graphics**

Military Sealift Command reports to the Commander, U.S. Transportation Command for defense transportation matters, to the Commander, U.S. Fleet Forces Command for Navy-unique matters and to the Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Research, Development and Acquisition for procurement policy and oversight matters.



Printed on recycled paper



# SEALOGEUR takes Navy, MSC to East Africa

**By Gillian Brigham**  
**SEALOGEUR Public Affairs**

September was a whirlwind month for Sealift Logistics Command Europe Commander Capt. Nicholas H. Holman. He met the president of Comoros and Mozambique's most famous pop star. He watched tribal dancers perform on a beach in Tanzania and briefed South African admirals in Cape Town. And he made history doing it.

Holman left SEALOGEUR headquarters in Naples, Italy, in late August for a five-week deployment to Southeast Africa aboard guided-missile destroyer USS Forrest Sherman. His mission? Reintroduce the U.S. Navy to a region of the world that had not seen an American naval ship in nearly 40 years.

"This is an exciting time for the Navy and for MSC," said Holman. "As the Navy's involvement in Africa grows, so will the need for MSC and its team of ships, civilian mariners and logistics professionals."

In addition to his SEALOGEUR duties, Holman was recently named as the commander of the Navy's newly established Southeast Africa Task Group CTG 60.5 by Adm. Harry Ulrich, commander, U.S. Naval Forces Europe. The purpose of CTG 60.5 is to build partnerships with Southeast African nations in the interest of promoting maritime security and safety in a region that struggles with maritime security threats like piracy, smuggling, drug trafficking and unlawful fishing.

For two years, U.S. Naval Forces Europe has been heavily involved in building maritime capabilities in West and Central Africa, particularly in the Gulf of Guinea. Since then, the Navy's footprint has expanded from one or two ship visits a year to a persistent presence of ships and personnel in the region. The success of the Navy's efforts on the west coast of Africa led to the establishment of CTG 60.5. During

the task group's inaugural deployment, Holman sailed aboard Forrest Sherman to Tanzania, Comoros, Mozambique and South Africa. In each country the commodore met with government and military officials to discuss security initiatives and future maritime collaboration with the nation. In addition, Forrest Sherman's crew hosted African sailors aboard ship in each port to train them in firefighting, shipboard maintenance, small boat handling and maritime interdiction operations. The ship's crew also conducted community relations projects, rebuilding orphanages and schools while the Navy Europe-Africa rock band Topside, embarked aboard Forrest Sherman, entertained thousands of citizens in each country the ship visited.

"The goal was to introduce ourselves to these countries and to start a dialogue about how we – the United States, Africa and our global allies – can work together to achieve a safe, secure and prosperous region free of maritime criminals and bad actors," said Holman. "It was an incredible first step. I sat down with the [chiefs of naval operations] of these navies, with ministers of defense and ambassadors, and the overwhelming response was that closer ties between

our nations and our navies are very much welcome and needed."

Holman's duties as commander of CTG 60.5 also tie to his "regular" job as Commander, SEALOGEUR/Task Force 63, 6th Fleet's logistics director for Europe and Africa. As the Navy expands its operations in Africa, MSC ships will play an increasingly strategic and important role ensuring Sailors, soldiers, Marines and airmen have access to the supplies and equipment they need on a continent largely

lacking in traditional logistics infrastructure.

"We've already had oilers like Big Horn and Laramie delivering fuel, food and supplies to ships operating in West Africa and MSC-contracted cargo ships delivering equipment to deployed personnel in the Gulf of Guinea," Holman said. "This is just the beginning. In December, [fleet replenishment oiler] USNS Leroy Grumman will be supporting the ships involved in 6th Fleet's African Partnership Station, or APS. APS is 6th Fleet's vision of the Navy's global fleet station concept and launches in the Gulf of Guinea in November. In the coming months, Maritime Prepositioning Ship Squadron One ships will also head down to Africa to participate in APS."

As the commander of SEALOGEUR, I am excited about these emerging opportunities for MSC in Africa and look forward to our expanding role supporting APS, maritime security operations, humanitarian assistance and other missions around the continent."



Commander, Southeast Africa Task Group 60.5 U.S. Navy Capt. Nicholas Holman (second from right), and two of USS Forrest Sherman's officers lead Mozambique's chief of naval operations and staff on a tour of the guided-missile destroyer while the ship was in Maputo, Mozambique.



Top: Sailors from the U.S. Navy Europe-Africa band and children from the Yatima Group Orphanage sing a popular African song during an afternoon the Sailors spent at the orphanage in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

Bottom: U.S. Navy Sailors provide maritime interdiction training for Mozambiquen sailors during a port visit to Maputo, Mozambique. During the visit, 50 Mozambiquen sailors a day trained, practicing everything from small-boat operation to basic first aid and damage-control techniques.







# HEEZEN MAK

**By Edward Baxter  
SEALOGFE Public Affairs**

Oceanographic survey ship USNS Bruce C. Heezen is the first Military Sealift Command ship to visit the Socialist Republic of Vietnam since the Vietnam War ended in 1975.

The purpose of the Oct. 17-20 Da Nang port call — only the sixth by a U.S. Navy vessel in more than a decade — was to familiarize counterparts from Vietnam's weather and hydrographic agencies with the U.S. Navy's oceanographic program and the capabilities of its hydrographic and oceanographic survey vessels.

"The entire crew worked closely with our embarked [Naval Oceanographic Office] detachment to make this visit to Vietnam rewarding, both culturally and for future common hydrographic interests," said ship's civilian master Capt. Bruce LaChance.

This is the first time a Pathfinder-class hydrographic and oceanographic survey ship has ever visited Vietnam.

Heezen's historic trip to the communist state included a hands-on demonstration for eight Vietnamese hydrographers who embarked with NAVOCEANO to chart a precarious water-

way about three miles from the Da Nang Harbor, Oct. 19.

U.S. and Vietnamese navies chose the location because of a reported waterway obstruction and used it as an at-sea classroom.

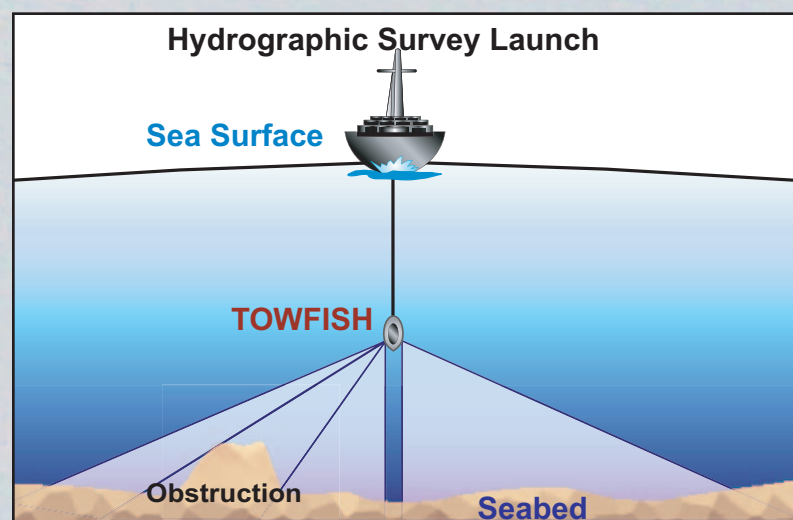
## **Classroom at sea**

Heezen's hydrographic survey launch — a 34-foot watercraft used to survey shallow waters — was slowly lowered into Da Nang's murky waters by Heezen's on-board cranes. The small craft, which resembles a commercial yacht, traveled about three miles from shore.

Once close to the reported obstruction, the launch, with Heezen's radio officer Rhon Nel-

son at the helm, outlined the survey area by traveling in a straight line in three different directions. The ship's on-board computers then connected the one-kilometer-long lines to form a navigational 'zone' for the launch to survey.

NAVOCEANO surveyor Neil Duffin then carefully placed the launch's side-scan towfish into the water. The sophisticated sonar created a high-resolution acoustic image of the seabed, and the data was



*This illustrates how a 34-foot hydrographic survey launch, which is placed in the water by oceanographic survey ship USNS Bruce C. Heezen, uses a sonar device called a side-scan towfish to send out acoustic waves. The sound waves assist surveyors in charting the ocean's floor.*

sent back to Heezen's laboratory for Vietnamese officials to observe.

Data was then printed on a poster-size chart and given to Dr. Le Cong Thanh, deputy director of Vietnam's Center for Hydrography and Meteorology, a department within the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment.

"We hope Heezen's visit is the first step towards increased cooperation in the future," said Thanh.

Representatives from the Vietnamese Foreign Ministry, Ministry of Science and Technology, and Vietnamese navy were also aboard for the three-day port call.

Heezen is a 329-foot-long, government-owned ship with 26 merchant mariners who work for a private company under contract to MSC.

Heezen, along with six other oceanographic survey ships, conducts a wide range of survey operations covering the disciplines of physical oceanography, hydrography and bathymetry, acoustics, and geophysics using sophisticated sensors to measure the temperature, salinity and currents in the ocean.

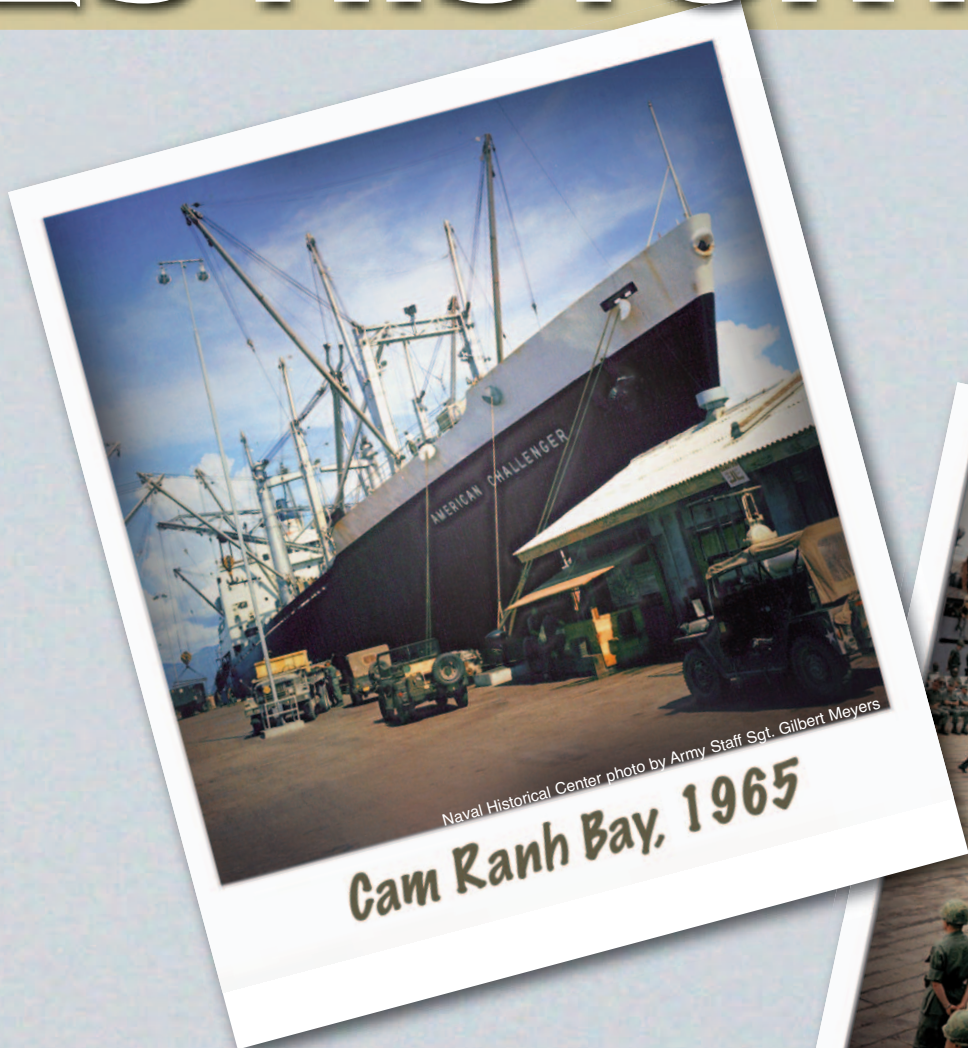
In addition, the vessels can map ocean bottoms to determine water depth and geology of the sea floor.



*Military Sealift Command oceanographic survey ship USNS Bruce C. Heezen is brought pierside through the murky waters of Da Nang, Vietnam, Oct. 17. Heezen made the first visit by an MSC ship since the Vietnam War.*



# ES HISTORY IN Vietnam



Naval Historical Center photo by Army Staff Sgt. Gilbert Meyers  
**Cam Ranh Bay, 1965**



Naval Historical Center photo by Army Pfc. Franklin G. Nickerson  
**Qui Nhon, 1967**



Naval Historical Center photo by Army Spc. Richard S. Durrance  
**South Vietnam, 1968**

## Historic significance

In 1975, after North Vietnam took over the southern part of Vietnam, the U.S. government severed all diplomatic relations. It wasn't until 1994 that the sanctions were lifted, and in 1995 the United States announced normalized contact to repair the ragged relationship left after the Vietnam War.

Oceanographic survey ship USNS Bruce C. Heezen's visit is the first by a Military Sealift Command ship since relations were reestablished.

The Military Sea Transportation Service, as MSC was called before 1970, had more than 400 government-owned and commercially chartered ships under its control during much of the late 1960s as a result of fighting in Vietnam. MSTs delivered nearly 181 million tons of dry cargo and almost 198 million tons of petroleum products to the military during the war years. The command transported nearly 96 percent of all U.S. military ocean cargo at that time and also operated 16 ships to move U.S. and allied troops.

Here are some of the significant MSC events during the Vietnam conflict:

**1954-1955** MSTs ships transport some 300,000 refugees fleeing North Vietnam to South Vietnam.

**1964** MSTs loses its first ship in Vietnam when aircraft ferry USNS Card is mined and sunk while moored in Saigon.

**1965** MSTs becomes more involved in Vietnam as transport ship USNS Mann moves 2,000 Republic of Korea soldiers from Korea to South Vietnam. Chartered ships transport U.S. Coast Guard Squadron One, composed of 17 patrol craft, to the war zone. Aircraft ferry USNS Kula Gulf delivers elements of the Army's 1st Cavalry Division to Vietnam.

**1966** Transport ships USNS General Alexander M. Patch and USNS General William O. Darby complete one of the longest troop lifts in U.S. military history, carrying American soldiers 12,500 miles from Boston, Mass., to Vietnam.

**1967** MSTs-chartered vessel SS President Buchanan is damaged by gunfire in the Long Tau River in Vietnam. MSTs-chartered vessel SS Seatrain Texas is hit by a floating explosive device while at anchor near Saigon.

**1975** Ships evacuate nearly 180,000 refugees from South Vietnam just before the fall of that country. One MSC ship carries nearly 17,000 refugees on a single voyage. Considerable ingenuity is displayed to house and feed so many on a 45-crew ship. Cooks prepare rice in sinks with the aid of steam hoses and make 55 gallon cans of tuna soup. Babies are reportedly born on ship.

## Historical photos:

Top: MSTs-chartered vessel SS American Challenger off-loads supplies at Cam Rahn Bay, Republic of Vietnam, Aug. 16, 1965.

Middle: Soldiers from the Army's 11th Light Infantry Brigade form up after the brigade's sealift to Qui Nhon, South Vietnam, Dec. 20-21, 1967. Military Sea Transportation Service — predecessor of Military Sealift Command — operated 16 ships to transport more than 40,000 U.S. and allied combat and support troops to South Vietnam.

Bottom: Men of the 271st Aviation Company, 1st Battalion, 164th Group, 1st Aviation Brigade, remove the protective cocoon from the first of 16 CH-47B helicopters on the deck of aircraft ferry USNS Point Cruz near South Vietnam Feb. 23-26, 1968.



## HQ • HIGHLIGHTS

Two Military Sealift Command employees – **Joan Divens**, environmental and safety policy director, and **Tiffany Brockman**, 2nd mate aboard dry cargo/ammunition ship USNS Richard E. Byrd – were panelists at the Maritime Administration’s Women on the Water conference in October. More than 70 female cadets from U.S. maritime academies attended the conference held at the Great Lakes Maritime Academy in Traverse City, Mich. The event focused on issues facing the U.S. maritime industry and, in particular, the role of women in the industry. During separate panels, Divens discussed shoreside maritime opportunities, and Brockman talked about the current afloat environment for female mariners.

**Rene Fry**, engineering, represented MSC on the Department of Defense’s Government Fuel Card Team, which received the department’s highest acquisition award for 2007 in November. The team earned the David Packard Excellence in Acquisition Award for transforming the multi-step, paper-intensive fuel ordering process into a credit card purchase program. The team developed

business rules and an organizational structure for the Internet-based fuel ordering system that uses credit card numbers to pay for purchases. The innovative system, called Ship’s Bunker Easy Acquisition Card, or SEACard, simplified ordering fuel for Navy, Coast Guard and Army ships from more than 250 commercial sources worldwide. MSC has used SEACard – which allows much greater visibility on fuel costs than before – to purchase more than \$200 million in fuel since its inception. **Rick Appling** from Sealift Logistics Command Pacific, **Mike Menchaca** from Sealift Logistics Command Atlantic, **Dennis Debraggio** from Sealift Logistics Command Far East and **Kevin Mabon** from Sealift Logistics Command Central are MSC’s worldwide accountable officials for the card. “Without them, this program would not have been the success that it is,” said Fry.

Thirty four MSC headquarters employees received length of service awards:

For 40 years of service, **Carleen Kolpa** from maritime forces and manpower management, and **Carolyn Price** from command, control, communications and computer systems.

For 35 years, **Frank Randall** from public affairs, **Rusty Bishop** and **Janet Noel** from the Special Mission Program, **Michael Touma** from the Prepositioning Program, **Larry Riley** from the Sealift Program, **Jim White** from the comptroller’s office and **Jim Fischer** from contracts and business management.

For 30 years, **Nick Roy** from the Special Mission Program, **Al Grace** from the Sealift Program, **Linda Broaddus** from the administrative support center, and **Sue Hawkins** and **Glenda Isaacs** from contracts and business management.

For 25 years, **Brad Parks** from the Naval Fleet Auxiliary Force, **Donna Carraway** from command, control, communications and computer systems, **Judy Gladson** from engineering, **Joann Parker** from the comptroller’s office, **David Dickens** from contracts and business management and **Maureen Boyle** from the administrative support center.

For 20 years, **David Townsend** from counsel, **Thyra Jones** from the administrative support center, **Jim Hicks** and **Rob Wolf** from the Prepositioning Program, **Kyrm Hickman** and **Roger Martenson** from maritime forces and manpower management, **Edgardo Guevara** from engineering, **Ernie**

**Martzen** and **Verna Moreno** from the comptroller’s office and **Joe Schneider** from the Naval Fleet Auxiliary Force.

For 10 years, **Ed Henderson** from the inspector general’s office, **Bruce Leach** from the Sealift Program, **Nestor Velasquez** from logistics and **Carlos Cruz** from strategic planning.

MSC congratulates the sailors of the quarter for the first and second quarter of 2007 and the civilian of the quarter for the second quarter: **Yeoman 2nd Class Rebecca Williams**, administrative support center; **Operations Specialist 2nd Class Kevin Cammie**, operations and plans; and **William Rys**, contracts and business management, respectively.

Navy **Cmdr. Greg Breen**, Naval Fleet Auxiliary Force, Navy **Cmdr. Ben Peabody**, operations and plans, and Navy **Command Master Chief Ken Green** received Meritorious Service medals during an Oct. 30 ceremony at the Washington Navy Yard.

MSC welcomes **Pearson Best**, Sealift Program, and **Christopher Byrnes**, engineering.

MSC bids farewell to **Sherri Jennings**, inspector general’s office; **Lisa Maple-Williams**, security; **Scott Dickinson**, Prepositioning Program; and **Frank Buckley** and **Michael Fleszar**, comptroller’s office.

## PACIFIC • BRIEFS

Sealift Logistics Command Pacific employees answered the call for assistance during the San Diego wildfires in late October. Navy **Operations Specialist 2nd Class Aristeo Orodio**, SEALOGPAC operations, volunteered at the Qualcomm Stadium shelter where he helped hand out food and water to the more than 10,000 evacuees there. All MSC ships in port in San Diego switched to auxiliary power from shore power to lighten the load on the San Diego power grid. SEALOGPAC temporarily reduced shoreside staffing in keeping with the order for essential personnel only, which helped keep roadways clear for emergency personnel and equipment. Two SEALOGPAC employees were evacuated from their homes, but both returned to find no fire damage.

Aircraft carrier USS John C. Stennis gave Bravo Zulu honors to fleet replenishment oiler USNS Henry J. Kaiser for the crew’s support of the Stennis tiger cruise for families and friends of crew members. During the cruise, Kaiser conducted an underway replenishment to demonstrate one of the many demanding missions performed by U.S. Navy ships on a daily basis.

Fleet replenishment oiler USNS Yukon conducted a family day for the crew’s friends and family to see the ship up close and personal. During the one-day trip, family and friends watched as Yukon participated in an underway replenishment with another Navy ship.

Navy **Capt. David Kiehl**, SEALOGPAC commander, visited employees and toured MSC assets in Alameda,



Smoke from the San Diego wildfires rises over the city’s skyline. No Sealift Logistics Command Pacific personnel suffered property losses as a result of the fires.

Calif., in November. The visit included a change of command ceremony at Navy Reserve Expeditionary Port Unit 117. Kiehl served as the keynote speaker at the ceremony.

Welcome aboard new SEALOGPAC employees **Philip Condella**, contracting officer; **David Coulter**, ship services officer; and **Goldy Garcia**, administrative assistant.

## FAR • EAST • HAILS



Lt. Cmdr. Greg Haynes, outgoing commanding officer of Military Sealift Command Office Diego Garcia, receives a Navy Commendation Medal for his outstanding service to MSC from Sealift Logistics Command Far East Commander Capt. Susan L. Dunlap in November.

Sealift Logistics Command Far East operations officer Navy **Cmdr. Curtis Lenderman** briefed U.S. Air Force Gen. Norton Schwartz, commander, U.S.

Transportation Command, on Military Sealift Command operations and activities in the Far East during the general’s Singapore visit, Oct. 9-11.

Chief staff officer Navy **Lt. Cmdr. Pablo Mir** and Prepositioning Ship USNS 1st Lt. Jack Lummus’ civilian master **Capt. David Hagner** led distinguished guests from Korea and the United States on a tour of the Maritime Prepositioning Ship Squadron Three flagship. Lt. Gen. Sungchool Lee and Maj. Gen. Deogchun Ko, both from the Republic of Korea’s Office of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; Maj. Gen. Jongsul Hong, commander, Criminal Investigation Division, Republic of Korea Ministry of National Defense; and U.S. Air Force Maj. Gen. Johnny Weida, deputy chief of staff, U.S. Forces, Korea, toured the ship near Guam, Oct. 12.

Prepositioning Ship USNS 1st Lt. Harry L. Martin participated in multinational exercise Pacific Shield 2007, a Japan-sponsored proliferation security initiative exercise Oct. 13. Ships and aircraft from Japan, Australia, France, the United Kingdom, Singapore and the United States participated. During the exercise, teams from Japanese de-

stroyer Ikazuchi and United Kingdom frigate HMS Monmouth boarded Martin, which played the role of a suspect merchant vessel.

Military Sealift Command Office Korea commanding officer Navy **Cmdr. Ron Oswald** received a plaque of commendation and letter of appreciation from Gab Yuen Lee, chairman of Busan’s regional office, Federation of Korean Trade Union, on the union’s 46th anniversary Nov. 2. “Commander Oswald has consistently dedicated himself to promoting Korean-American friendship,” Lee said.

B.J. Benn, assistant secretary of the Navy (Installations and Environment) visited Pier Eight in Busan, Korea, Oct. 25. Along with U.S. Army counterparts from Surface Deployment and Distribution Command’s 837th Transportation Battalion, MSCO Korea operations officer **Xavier Monroy** briefed Penn on sealift operations on the Korean peninsula and accompanied him on a tour of port facilities.



## COMPASS • HEADING

Civil service mariners in Bremerton, Wash., and San Diego prepared to bring new ships into the Military Sealift Command fleet.

Advanced cadres, called nucleus #1 crews, worked with dry cargo/ammunition ship USNS

Robert E. Peary, which will have a civil service master in charge, and submarine tender USS Emory S. Land. Peary and Land will be delivered to MSC in 2008.

Civil service mariners aboard rescue/salvage ship USNS Salvor made

history in Sandakan, Sabah, Malaysia; Marmugao, Goa, India; and Belawan, North Sumatra, Indonesia. They were the first civil service mariners ever to visit these ports. During the Belawan stop, the crew hosted locals from the governor's office, faculty and cadets from a maritime academy, and a group of school children including ill chil-

dren sponsored by the Make-A-Wish Foundation.

Fair winds and following seas to the following civil service mariners as they retire: **Chief Steward Travis Smith, Yeoman Storekeeper James Starbuck, Deck Engine Machinist Walter Taylor Jr., Chief Electrician Troy L. Ward and Chief Cook Wilbert E. Wilson Jr.**

## ATLANTIC • LINES

**Tom D'Agostino**, Sealift Logistics Command Atlantic representative in Charleston, S.C., coordinated local law enforcement canine training aboard large, medium-speed, roll-on/roll-off ship USNS Dahl Oct. 18.

Dahl's, master, **Capt. Brad Collins**, also hosted U.S. Marine Corps personnel from Blount Island Command near Jacksonville, Fla., on a tour.

In October, the SEALOGLANT office in Beaumont, Texas, oversaw the loading of large, medium-speed, roll-on/roll-off ships USNS Yano and USNS Fisher with U.S. Army cargo destined for Iraq.

In Jacksonville, SEALOGLANT representative **Rich Bolduc** assisted with the discharge of U.S. Marine Corps equipment from Maritime Prepositioning Ships SS PFC Eugene A. Obregon and USNS LCPL Roy M. Wheat and fuel from tanker USNS Samuel L. Cobb in October.

SEALOGLANT's deputy operations officer, Navy **Cmdr. Mark**

**Sumile**, returned Oct. 10 from a six-month tour of duty as a member of the U.S. Central Command's South Asian States operations planning team in Tampa, Fla. The team's overarching mission was to revise and update the strategic plan for that region, especially Afghanistan.

Sumile was the team's representative assigned to revise the counternarcotics strategy and to help develop CENTCOM's possible role in assisting the U.S. Agency for International Development in the repair of the Kajaki Dam project.

According to Sumile, the dam's hydroelectric generators were built by USAID in 1975 and have been the subject of many costly repair attempts since it was bombed during the initial phases of the war on terrorism that routed the Taliban from power in that country.

"It's great to be home again, but it was also very rewarding to be involved in a project that means so much to the stability of a very troubled part of the world," Sumile said.

## CENTRAL • CURRENTS

Military Sealift Command continued to perform within the challenging world of 5th Fleet naval operations. With multiple changes to schedules, MSC ships answered the call and completed their mission of keeping warships resupplied, at sea and on station.

One major challenge occurred when fleet replenishment oiler USNS Tippecanoe's main reduction gear malfunctioned, forcing the ship into port for almost three weeks. With only four MSC supply ships operating in 5th Fleet, the sudden loss of one necessitated many last-minute changes. Military Sealift Fleet Support Command's Ship Support Unit Bahrain quickly developed a comprehensive repair plan and completed it on schedule. Tippecanoe returned to service and resumed full replenishment-at-sea responsibilities.

With the formation of Task Group 58.1, responsible for the Horn of Africa, CTF 53 was tasked with providing timely logistical support to ships operating in that area in support

of counterpiracy operations. Dry cargo/ammunition ship USNS Lewis and Clark, fleet replenishment oiler USNS Leroy Grumman and fast combat support ship USNS Supply immediately swung into action. These ships quickly loaded fuel, supplies and passengers and transited to the HOA region to complete their individual missions.

Fleet ocean tug USNS Catawba participated in an oil spill clean-up drill that was part of a larger crisis-response exercise in November. The exercise was designed to improve the Navy's response capability to a myriad of crises, ranging from natural to man-made emergencies. Catawba successfully completed the clean-up of the mock-oil-spill portion of the exercise before returning to port.

In October, Sealift Logistics Command Central coordinated eight dry cargo operations, delivering almost 668,000 square feet of combat equipment, and eight wet cargo operations, moving more than 930,000 gallons of fuel.

## EUROPE • NEWS

Maritime Prepositioning Ship Squadron One ships USNS LCPL Roy M. Wheat and USNS 2nd Lt. John P. Bobo arrived in Split, Croatia, Sept. 21 to participate in multinational military exercise Noble Midas 2007. More than 2,000 personnel, 30 ships and 20 aircraft from 12 nations collaborated in the NATO-led exercise of the NATO response force. At the beginning of the exercise, Wheat and Bobo trained for real-world missions by an-

choring off-shore and conducting joint-logistics-over-the-shore, or JLOTS, operations. JLOTS allows ships to off-load combat cargo at sea using a system of barges, ferries and floating causeways to deliver cargo ashore when traditional pier facilities are unavailable. Using the Improved Navy Lighterage System for the first time in theater, Bobo and Wheat off-loaded military equipment in Croatia and then re-loaded it aboard ship.

Later in the exercise, Wheat participated in maritime interdiction operation training, allowing security teams to board and search for contraband. Military Sealift Command fleet replenishment oiler USNS Big Horn also contributed to Noble Midas, providing daily refueling to U.S. and NATO ships participating in the exercise. Following Noble Midas, Wheat sailed to Rota, Spain, where the ship delivered three pieces of lighterage to Naval Station Rota on Oct. 17.

Rota will use this lighterage as a small boat pier while their port is under construction.

MSC-chartered cargo ship BBC Sweden loaded Seabee equipment on the small island nation of Sao Tome and Principe Sept. 27. MSC-chartered vessel CEC Endeavor originally delivered the equipment to the island in July so deployed Seabees could build a patrol boat ramp at the City of Sao Tome's coast guard base. The construction of the new boat ramp enabled Sao Tome's coast guard to once again launch patrol boats from their base. BBC Sweden returned the Seabee equipment to Rota, Spain, in October.

SEALOGEUR welcomes Operations Support Assistant **Caroline Richard**.

## Noble Midas

*Pieces of the new Improved Navy Lighterage System, or INLS, pull alongside Maritime Prepositioning Ship Squadron One ship USNS 2nd Lt. John P. Bobo in preparation to load military equipment and deliver it ashore in Split, Croatia, during Exercise Noble Midas.*



U.S. Navy photo by Ensign Helen Ringer



# Kanawha earns top maritime award for daring rescue in Arabian Sea

**By Rosemary Heiss  
MSC Public Affairs**

On a moonless night in late June, when gale-force winds commanded 10-foot waves from the Arabian Sea near Oman, a 250-foot ship was disabled and sinking. The North Korean-flagged vessel, Jai Laxmai, as tall as a four-story building, was a quarter of the way underwater and listing precariously. Unable to deploy lifeboats, its 16 crew members were helpless until Military Sealift Command fleet replenishment oiler USNS Kanawha arrived at the scene.

Kanawha's civil service master Capt. David Gommo and his crew received the most prestigious award in the U.S. maritime industry for heroism in saving the lives of stranded seafarers. Will McDermott, Kanawha's chief mate, accepted the Admiral of the Ocean Sea Award on behalf of the crew at a ceremony in New York City, Nov. 2.

The award, named for Christopher Columbus, is presented annually to mariners who demonstrate superior seamanship and who risk their lives to save other troubled seafarers like those aboard Jai Laxmai.

Kanawha's crew, assisted by French warship Dupleix, braved 27-knot winds and waves to rescue the mariners aboard Jai Laxmai.

Though the French crew thought attempting a rescue in the extreme seas would be too dangerous, with 17 years of sea experience, Gommo determined they could launch their rigid-hull, inflatable boat for the rescue.

McDermott, cargo engineer Kenny Allen and ordinary seaman Duran Carrillo, along with a U.S. Navy security detachment Sailor, braved the sea to get the RHIB to the sinking ship.

Waves swelled under the RHIB and then flattened out, dropping the boat out from under them.

"A couple times, the RHIB almost landed on the deck of their ship," said Allen. "The sea was pushing us all around. My pants ripped; I was black, blue and hurting for three days after that."

Kanawha's RHIB boat carried 12 of the 16 stranded crew members to safety aboard Dupleix. The French ship's RHIB rescued the remaining four.

Once aboard Dupleix, the Jai Laxmai crew was transported to Salalah, Oman.

Though the rescue was dangerous, Kanawha's crew never hesitated.

"The mariners creed is to help another mariner in need," said Gommo, reflecting the spirit that earned his crew the AOTOS award from United Seamen's Service.

USS is a nonprofit organization that has provided community services to U.S. merchant mariners for 65 years around the globe.

With its eight worldwide centers, USS accommodates the transient lifestyle of the mariner. The organization offers recreation, food and beverage, communications, libraries, and legal and medical assistance to U.S. seafarers.

Fast sealift ship USNS Antares also received a mariner's plaque for rescuing a sick fisherman in the Gulf of Mexico in May. On Oct. 1, the Maritime Administration took over managing fast sealift ships on behalf of MSC.



*Rear Adm. Robert D. Reilly Jr., commander, Military Sealift Command, congratulates fleet replenishment oiler USNS Kanawha's Chief Mate Will McDermott, who accepted the Admiral of the Ocean Sea Award Nov. 2 from the United Seamen's Service. The award is the most prestigious given annually in the maritime industry.*

## Grasp divers help clean sea floor near Italy

**By Gillian Brigham  
SEALOGEUR Public Affairs**

For 34 years, U.S. Navy submarines operating in the Mediterranean Sea have found refuge and a place to resupply at Naval Support Activity La Maddalena, located in an archipelago on Italy's scenic island of Sardinia. Since 1973, submarine tenders – which provide maintenance and logistics services to nuclear-powered submarines – have been homeported in La Maddalena, supporting the operation of submarines in Europe and Africa. Last year, however, the Navy announced that NSA La Maddalena would close as part of theater-wide transformation efforts and the strategic re-distribution of Navy resources around the globe.

In preparation for the September 2007 departure of USS Emory S. Land — a submarine tender destined for service in the MSC fleet in 2008 — and the scheduled spring 2008 base closure, a massive environmental clean up operation was scheduled in order to leave the harbor in pristine condition after decades of U.S. Navy use.

Enter Military Sealift Command rescue and salvage ship USNS Grasp.

Grasp, which transferred to MSC from the Navy's combatant fleet in January 2006, has the capability to free grounded ships and conduct heavy lift, towing, diving and salvage operations. In short, Grasp is the ideal platform for a clean up mission.

Grasp and its embarked dive team, Mobile Diving and Salvage Unit 2 Detachment 6 arrived in Sardinia Aug. 14 and began the nearly six-week process of removing 1 million pounds of debris from the U.S. Navy's three-decade-long presence in La Maddalena's harbor.

The cleanup was a massive undertaking. Grasp and the MDSU 2 Det 6 divers joined four

teams of Navy and contracted divers to begin their sweep of the ocean bottom.

"It was a historic event," said Grasp's civil service master Capt. Jose Delfaus. "This was one of the first times that a Navy dive operation had this many dive teams in a location. It was also the first time that seven decompression chambers were located on-site."

In addition to the divers, Grasp's crew of 26 civil service mariners played a key role supporting dive operations and ensuring that the ship was ready to respond to any and all requests for assistance.

The crew provided material handling and supported boat training to the embarked divers, and they kept the equipment maintained and available at all times. The ship's 40-ton boom was also key in lifting heavier debris. The ship's salvage basket was the largest on site and was used to great effect. The embarked divers nicknamed it the "Big Bucket."



U.S. Navy photos



*Above: Divers from Mobile Diving and Salvage Unit 2 Detachment 6, embarked on rescue and salvage ship USNS Grasp, prepare to dive off the coast of Sardinia to conduct an environmental harbor clean up in preparation for the closure of Naval Support Activity La Maddalena. Divers cleared debris from La Maddalena's Santo Stefano Island, where U.S. Navy submarine tenders have been moored for 34 years.*

*Left: Grasp and its embarked dive team helped clear more than 1 million pounds of debris like this from the harbor.*